

Public

Strategic Spatial Energy Plan (SSEP) External Governance Quarterly Summary: Q3 July – September 2025

During this quarter the key focus has been on modelling to develop a wide range of plausible future pathways which will then be further analysed and refined.

The themes considered across potential pathways and the trade-offs between different technologies and approaches have been shared and discussed through the governance groups. Technology and nation specific governance and industry stakeholder workshops have been held to consider the detail of key aspects of the potential pathways and help to refine the modelling.

The process for narrowing down the long list of pathways using critical success factors and the SSEP objectives has been shared and discussed through the external governance groups to ensure the necessary factors are considered.

The SSEP commission sets out that the SSEP pathway options must include at least one low regrets pathway showing future infrastructure that will be robust across most or all plausible futures. The governance groups have supported the detailed work to develop the approach for determining a low regrets pathway, including the risks that NESO should consider.

The SSEP committee reviewed the stakeholder engagement and communication approach considering the formal governance, expert working groups and societal and community engagement. The group discussed the feedback received so far and the plan for future engagement.

The Expert Advisory Group (EAG) has been focusing on consolidating feedback from across the stakeholder working groups, which are considering spatial planning from environmental, land, marine and wider industry perspectives. A formal briefing note has been prepared by the group which outlines the key areas they would like NESO to consider, as development of the SSEP continues.

NESO is undertaking a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) and Marine Conservation Zone assessment (MCZa) on the SSEP. The assessments are being undertaken alongside development of the SSEP to help inform decision making. The work to date on scoping evidence gathering and methodology development was shared with the SSEP Committee and there was discussion around how this process would need to work alongside key milestones on the overall development of the SSEP.

Written October 2025